

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 /071 W

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R 100900Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5565

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 0902

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, YO, AL

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV-ALBANIAN RELATIONS SUBJECTED TO INCREASING  
STRAIN

REF: BELGRADE 807 B. 75 BELGRADE 5753 C. 75 BELGRADE 709 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY : OVER FEBRUARY 6-8 WEEKEND SEVERAL NEW  
STORIES HAVE EMERGED WITH CONFIRM SHAKY STATE OF  
YUGOSLAV-ALBANIAN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. AFP BELGRADE REPORTED ON FEBRUARY 5 THAT CAPTAIN  
OF ALBANIAN FISHING BOAT WAS SHOT AND KILLED DURING CHASE  
BY YUGOSLAV PATROL CRAFT, AND THAT CAPTAIN HAD BEEN  
NAMED NATIONAL HERO OF ALBANIA. YUGOSLAV PRESS ACKNOW-  
LEDGED STORY ON FEBRUARY 7, ADDIN THAT INCIDENT HAD TAKEN  
PLACE DECEMBER 15, 1975 AND THAT YUGOSLAVS HAD EXPRESSED  
REGRETS ABOUT INCIDENT EVEN THOUGH FISHING BOAT WAS IN  
YUGOSLAV TERRITORIAL WATERS AND CAPTAIN HAD FAILED TO  
HEED YUGOSLAV COMMANDS TO HALT. ATA (ALBANIAN NEWS  
AGENCY) REPORTED FEBRUARY 6 THAT FISHING BOAT WAS IN  
ALBANIAN WATERS.

3. MEANWHILE ON FEBRUARY 8 YUGOSLAV PRESS ANNOUNCED  
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SENTENCING OF 19 ALBANIAN "IRREDENTISTS" AND "COUNTER-

REVOLUTIONARIES" IN PRISTINA. EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE COVERAGE GIVEN EVENT IN PRESS, WHICH HAD TILL NOW KEPT MUM ABOUT THE PROCEEDINGS. ACCOMPANYING EDITORIAL IN "BORBA" EXPLAINED THAT 19 HAD TRIED "TO CREATE A SO-CALLED 'KOSOVO NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT', BUT HAD FAILED TO GAIN ANY KIND OF WORKER SUPPORT". GROUP WAS INSTEAD SUPPORTED BY "REACTIONARY ANTI-YUGOSLAV FORCES OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY".

4. ACCORDING TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT HERE, ALBANIAN NATIONALISM HAS TAKEN OTHER CONCRETE FORMS OF EXPRESSION DURING THE LAST YEAR. AN EXPLOSION IN A PRISTINA HOTEL KNOCKED OUT TELEPHONE SYSTEM. WHEN THE DECEMBER 1974 PRISTINA UNIVERSITY DEMONSTRATIONS (REF C) GREW SERIOUS AND THE KOSOVO POLICE WERE CONSIDERED UNRELIABLE, THE AUTHORITIES CALLED IN SERBIAN POLICE TO RESTORE ORDER.

5. COMMENT: YUGOSLAVS CONTINUE TO TAKE CONCILIATORY LINE WITH ALBANIANS, OFFERING REGRETS OVER FISHING BOAT

INCIDENT AND NOT DIRECTLY LINKING ALBANIA WITH IRREDENTIST ACTIVITIES IN KOSOVO, BLAMING INSTEAD "REACTIONARY ANTI-YUGOSLAV FORCES", BUT ALBANIANS THEMSELVES ARE APPARENTLY IN NO MOOD TO BE PLACATED. FOR THIER PART, YUGOSLAVS ARE NOW ACKNOWLEDGING PUBLICLY THAT IRREDENTISM (READ ALBANIAN NATIONALISM) IS A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS PROBLEM IN KOSOVO, AND ARE AT SAME TIME HIGHLIGHTING KOSOVO'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS AND ACTIONS WHICH MUST BE TAKEN TO SOLVE THEM.  
SITPERMAN

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